

## Letter

# COVID-19 Vaccine and Role of Community Pharmacists

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## Dear Editor,

Over a year and a half ago, the very first case of coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 was reported, causing a global pandemic, that is, COVID-19. It came as a turning point, making scientists dig for maximum data on the virus and learn its management [1, 2]. In this while, some preventive measures like physical distancing and protective gears have become an essential part of daily life. One of the swift stratagems toward recovery is vaccination against COVID-19. Soon after discovering the genetic and phenotypic structure of the coronavirus, vaccine production was uptaken by state-of-the-art labs and pharmaceutical companies globally on an immediate basis. As per WHO's announcement on July 15, 2020, around 150 countries were tied up in the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) lead. It lent a means designed to ensure fair, speedy, and equitable COVID-19 vaccines to people worldwide. Such a move proved a way forward to betterment and success against disease. Yet, data on safety remains essential and was derived from data available on earlier vaccine development campaigns [3].

Data on previous vaccines against infectious diseases reflect saving over 23 million people from 2011 to 2020. However, the success of vaccines relies on people's acceptance and compliance with vaccine regimens. Right from the first case of the COVID-19 pandemic, along with frontline workers, pharmacists testified for an active role in the delivery and supply of medications, counseling leading to the public's understanding of the disease, testing patients, and recently in vaccine administration [4].

Around the globe, we see pharmacies following business models as per regional government law. The pharmacist's role switched from the conventional community and product-focused practice to the patient-oriented role with coverage of clinical aspects in the recent past. Sophisticated setups with advanced facilities focus on providing customized therapy with a better insight into drug interaction [5–7].

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With COVID-19 vaccination, the role of community pharmacists can be availed in making the immunization process controlled and more effective. The pharmacist's position can be seen in retail setups and even vaccination centers, mimicking vaccination with tetanus and influenza viruses. The 2017 CDC data revealed that the rate of adult vaccine escalated from 23% to 28%. Also, the speed of vaccines increased amongst people aged 65, with pharmacists rendering immunization. It also helps lower the rate of hospitalization and death rates, helping reduce the rate of medical care [8].

The last few years have also established the pharmacist's role in aiding the flu shots; this has allowed patients with vaccination at the nearest point, thus saving money. This service at the end of the pharmacist can be extended over remote areas, extending the coverage. This entire model can be replicated to provide vaccine shots during the pandemic, utilize pharmacists' expertise, and get better public health services. Moreover, it builds up a cycle of trust among the public and pharmacists by being available for guidance and counseling, especially with the urgency and necessity of vaccinating people around the globe against COVID-19. The proactive role of the community pharmacist will become appreciable with the involvement in eradicating the life-threatening virus, provided people give away reluctance in this matter [9, 10].

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## Competing Interests

No conflict of interest was declared by the authors.

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